

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGR-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00

EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 SP-02 STR-04

TRSE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 SAM-01 OMB-01 IO-11 SS-15 NSC-05

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P 111739Z FEB 76

FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 499

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PASS AGRICULTURE FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY BELL AND DONALD J.
NOVOTNY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, EEC

SUBJECT: USSR GRAIN TRADE INTELLIGENCE

1. OUR WELL-PLACED SOURCE IN THE FRENCH BRANCH OF ONE OF THE MAJOR US GRAIN EXPORTERS TOLD US THAT ANOTHER MAJOR US GRAIN EXPORTER HAD JUST BEEN AWARDED A TENDER FOR 50,000 TONS OF BARLEY TO AN UNSPECIFIED DESTINATION, INDISPUTABLY THE USSR. AN EC COMMISSION GRAIN EXPERT SUBSEQUENTLY CONFIRMED TO US THAT A TOTAL OF 55,000 TONS OF BARLEY HAD BEEN AWARDED ON FEBRUARY 5, 1976 TO BIDDERS UNDER THE FREE MARKET TENDER FOR ZONES I, II, III, IV AND VI (REPORTED TOFAS 5). A MAXIMUM SUBSIDY OF 35 U.A./M.T. WAS SET UP FOR THESE AWARDS. THE COMMISSION EXPERT SAID THAT THESE EXPORTS COULD GO TO THE USSR (ZONES II AND III).

2. THE SAME INDUSTRY SOURCE REPORTS THAT ONE OF THEIR CONTACTS, WHO VERY RECENTLY RETURNED FROM THE USSR, REPORTED THAT THE SNOW COVER AND GROUND HUMIDITY IN THE MAJOR USSR GRAIN AREAS ARE ADEQUATE AND THAT HE THEREFORE EXPECTS A "NORMAL" GRAIN CROP. THE TRAVELER TO THE USSR ALSO DESCRIBED THE CUSTOM OF KOLKHOZ

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MANAGERS OF DELIBERATELY UNDERESTIMATING PRODUCTION IN ORDER TO

AVOID THE IMPOSITION BY CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES OF HIGHER
PRODUCTION GOALS. HE SAID THAT THIS HAS TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN
MASSAGING PRODUCTION ESTIMATES OBTAINED FROM USSR CENTRAL GRAIN
AUTHORITIES. MORRIS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, SALES, GRAINS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ECBRU01428
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760052-0257
From: EC BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760261/aaaacayw.tel
Line Count: 65
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 MAR 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <30 JUN 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: USSR GRAIN TRADE INTELLIGENCE
TAGS: EAGR, EEWT, PINR, UR, EEC
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006